

TENDER HANDS CARE FOR GRAVES OF A.E.F.

Frenchwomen at Suresnes Cemetery Are Jealous Guardians

WORD SENT TO FAMILIES

Bodies of Seven Hundred American Soldiers Lie in Quiet God's Acre Near Paris

On the wooded slope of a steep hill that rises high over a great bend in the river Seine lies a little plot of earth that is as much American as is the National Cemetery at Arlington or the hallowed ground of Gettysburg.

It is a quiet and peaceful spot, for although Paris is so near—the slender pinnacle of the Eiffel tower is in plain view over the trees—the city is separated from the American cemetery at Suresnes by the green expanse of the Bois de Boulogne. The heart of the city that is the heart of the world is not five miles away; you would think it at least 50.

It is a spot far removed from war, and yet there are enough of the accompaniments of war about it to remind the visitor that the 700 graves here are the graves of soldiers—mostly of soldiers who died of their wounds on the journey in from the front or at one of the hospitals in or near the capital.

Further up the slope from the ramparts of the fort of Mont Valerien, one in the chain of defenses that surround Paris. Overhead Allied planes fly from field to field, the drone of their motors never so clear as in this quiet countryside. And more warlike still, an occasional cannon shot echoes from a testing ground in the neighborhood.

Graves Still Abloom

The little cemetery itself, with its well aligned rows of white wooden crosses, will some day be as green and fair as God's acre as any in France. It is becoming so as fast as the loving hands of the living can convert it into one. Even in these fresh fall days, the graves are all abloom, and hardy shrubs add a touch of somber beauty to the little corners and round points.

The round point in the center of the cemetery can tell a story of its own that represents the forging of one more indissoluble link in the chain of Franco-American friendship. It is the work of an elderly Frenchman of means who insisted on doing it with his own hands. The sergeant in charge of the cemetery, a lawyer in civil life, was equally insistent that help be provided, and the Frenchman finally compromised on letting two private help him in his labor of love. The three of them, on hands and knees in the soft earth, set out the rows and clusters of shrubs that are now one of the most striking features of the cemetery's beauty.

This same Frenchman, not content with the round point, also adopted 15 graves, which he is caring for himself. Most of the graves have been thus adopted, the rest being cared for by the majority of the caretakers are Frenchwomen of high and low degree.

One such Frenchwoman, wanting to adopt a grave, wrote her husband at the front, asking his advice.

Triangles in Blossom

"Do just as you choose," he answered. "But if you adopt one, send me less money. It must be cared for properly." At the end of some of the rows a small triangle of earth has been left, made necessary by the curving paths. The little triangles are abloom with a border of red-tinged yellow flowers that resemble our own marigolds, and the space within is richly blue with a multitude of thistle-like blossoms. It is a harmony of floral color that one would not expect to find in a cemetery.

If you visit that cemetery, a Frenchwoman, possibly with one or two sober-faced children with her, perhaps in mourning, will very likely come up to you and ask you how she can get word to the family of the soldier whose grave is in her dependable stewardship, and whose name she will invariably have carefully copied on a slip of paper.

You have simply to tell her to address the Graves Registration Service at Tours, and in a few weeks the family of a fallen comrade will know that the resting place of his hero is entrusted to tender and loving hands.

Brook No Interference

These Frenchwomen are jealous guardians, and will not brook the interference of an outsider as they go about their self-appointed task. Recently a Frenchwoman, attending to the grave of an American major, left the mound a moment to throw away some withered flowers before she laid fresh ones there. In the interval another woman, obviously an American, obviously someone to whom the dead officer had been near and dear, knelt over the grave to lay upon it her own offering.

The Frenchwoman came back. At first she did not understand, and the barrier of language did not ease the tension. It was a situation calling for considerable diplomacy on the part of any third party who was willing to risk interfering.

Perhaps that is why they picked for the sergeant in charge a man who used to be a lawyer. He walked over to the pair and, in the best French he could command, explained the situation. Then he turned away. There are scenes at which even an ex-lawyer knows he has no right to be a spectator.

Little Groups Look On

Always, at the gate of the cemetery, you will find a little group of the recently curious—French grown-ups, children, soldiers. Little knots of them gather in the tree-lined highway which, ever since the first American soldier was laid away in Suresnes, has been called Boulevard Washington.

They bare their heads, make the sign of the cross or salute every time a flag-draped coffin is taken through the gate and laid on the cinder path—condemned because the wife of a French commandant has been shipping two truck loads of cinders to the cemetery every day—before the bugler, farther up the hill, sounds the final requiem.

WOMEN FARMERS MAKE GOOD

[By Cable to THE STARS AND STRIPES] AMERICA, Oct. 10.—The Women's Land Army has made a great drive to provide thousands of women workers to gather the present remaining crops and prepare for a mighty farming war next season.

They have demonstrated their success. Hardened old farmers doff their hats and admit that civilized women can work like accomplished farm hands.

DOUAL, 1918

"The enemy is burning Douai."—British communiqué.

The light that came from Douai in days of long ago, when monks of Douai labored their Master's truth to show into a darkened Europe, now shines with brighter glow.

The monks who then translated The Bible of Douai, Look down, we may be certain, With horror and dismay, Upon the German savagery That blights their home today.

The Prince of Peace and Freedom Those good men served; and now The Prince of Sin and Darkness With torch comes in to cov.

The helpless ones who nonetheless Before him will not bow.

They wrought in words of glory, Of gentleness and peace;

The Hun works devastation, O, may the righteous Armies To Douai soon bring peace!

Q.M. CHEVRONS GIVE WAY TO MEDICOS'

And They Don't Speak Now, All Because of Stolen Mascot

MARCEL CHANGES COLORS

Sadder and Wiser Little Frenchman Promises That It Won't Ever Happen Again

Members of a certain truck company and a medical detachment stationed at S.O.S. headquarters just coldly to one another as they pass nowadays. And all because the medics allowed Marcel to wear out the seat of his breeches sliding down an upturned mess hall bench and lose his wrist watch in the bargain, and worst of all, because they ripped off Marcel's quartermaster sergeant's chevrons and sewed on a medical corps caduceus while the truck company was off to the front with a convoy of motor trucks.

Marcel Duplessis is the truck company's mascot. He was the proudest of all the mascots around S.O.S. headquarters because of his 500 franc outfit of tailor made uniform, leather puttees, wrist watch and general haberdashery. In fact, he was so proud of his uniform that if he was out for a stroll of a Sunday with the first sergeant, and a kindly French lady tried to warm up to him and give him the French equivalent of "What's your name, little boy?" Marcel would absolutely refuse to understand and reply, "American, speak English."

Occasionally he would leave the company headquarters long enough to go over to the French canteen where his mother works and let her feast her eyes on the magnificent apparel of her nine year old son. He liked to have her tell him that he looked just as brave and proud as his father "mort pour la patrie" when he departed for the front four long years ago.

Wrist Watch on Exhibition

His numerous brothers and sisters were even allowed a good look at his wrist watch on such occasions. At reveille he was always the first in line, and if the sergeant in calling the roll by any chance forgot to call out his name, he was very much distressed until he was assured that it wouldn't happen again.

Things were going along beautifully for Marcel until one dark day his company got a hurry order to move out to the front with a truck convoy which was badly needed up behind the front at St. Mihiel. The trip would be too dangerous for Marcel, the first sergeant thought, so he turned him over to the medics for safe keeping until the company's return. But the medics were busy, and Marcel was only a casual mascot, so he did just about as he pleased.

Now a nine year old French kid is just the same as any other kid of the same age, even if he is a mascot. First he tore the seat out of his breeches. Then the medics' dog chewed his service hat, making it lose that snappy, ironed appearance. His wrist watch disappeared from the window sill of the bath house, and worst of all, he was weak enough to allow a pill-pusher to exchange his Quartermaster chevrons for that of the Medical Corps.

That was what his patrons were sore about when they returned, that changing of chevrons. But Marcel has talked himself back into his old time place in their affections. He has been measured for a new pair of breeches, his hat has been ironed, and come payday, he will have another wrist watch. But he has been warned against any association in the future with the gay Medical men.

FORD WON'T SPEND ONE CENT TO WIN

Senatorial Candidate Defies All Time Honored Political Conventions

[By Cable to THE STARS AND STRIPES]

AMERICA, Oct. 10.—Henry Ford has made the calamitous announcement, in accepting the Democratic nomination for United States Senator from Michigan, that he will not spend one cent to win. He also announces that he wants the people to understand that he is not a party man, that he will not accept the nomination with any specific obligation or pledge, and that he does not bind himself to vote for any measure because it is labeled Democratic or Republican, but will vote according to his judgment for the best interests of all the people.

The Democratic convention adopted resolutions pledging complete support of his candidacy, despite all these shocking slams at all political rules. Thus Ford goes before the Michigan electorate with no other pledge than to support the President.

Governor Edge has won the Republican nomination for United States Senator from New Jersey.

Tired Soldier: How far to the front lines, Buddy? M.P.: Four kilometers as the airplanes fly. Soldier: Yes, but airplanes don't have corns.

KRONPRINZ'S DOUBLE TERRIBLY SHOCKED

Monocled German Officer Marvels at Fuss Over Mere Civilian

M.P. OFFERS FREE SMOKES

Hun Who Disapproves of American Military Methods Gets Chance to Study Them

There is one imposing young officer, recently attached to the American Army as a prisoner of war, who finds it quite impossible to conceal from his new hosts his utter disapproval of their military methods, and particularly of their military manners.

He little thought when, as a youngster, he was sent off to the Grosslichterfelde school for officers, that there would come an inglorious day in September, 1918, when he would be captured whole by a shockingly trained army from America. On that greatest day in his life—the day the first person noticed his quite striking resemblance to the German Crown Prince—his contentment was undimmed by the shadow of any prophecy that he would live to be marched along a shell-toned French highway in front of the watchful rifle of a Yankee M.P.

Cane and Monocle

This long, lithe figure through the mud and rain from Malancourt was extremely fatiguing, but he managed to swing his cane jauntily enough and his monocle never once fell from his eye, though it gave a convulsive start when his nonchalant, not to say jocular, guard ventured to offer him a cigarette.

He simply could not understand the air of informal jollity that enlivened the ramshackle bar where he was first questioned and where, he noted with pained surprise, a whole truck load of German non-coms was engaged in affable conversation with a group of Yankees swarming around them.

But his most confounding experience awaited him at that fortunately spacious pen at corps headquarters where, though the first day of the battle northwest of Verdun was not yet spent, more than a thousand prisoners were already assembled.

Assisting the Officers

The German officers lounged on the grass, while the equivalent of several German companies shifted in uneasy groups within the pen. Suddenly the M.P.'s in charge shouted: "Achtung! Still stehen." Every prisoner there, except the officers, snapped automatically to attention. The officers were assisted to that posture by the M.P.'s.

The ruler for the Crown Prince, who had been moved to inner laughter by the lackadaisical manners of his captors, assumed that all this fuss must portend the arrival of General Pershing at least. He could hardly believe his senses when he found that it heralded the approach of a mere civilian, a little civilian in a derby hat.

He jumped to the conclusion, then, that President Wilson had come to visit the cage, but, if this were true, how was he to explain the way the M.P.'s all crowded around their visitor, a sociable group from which there issued from time to time a burst of laughter?

Finally his curiosity was too strong for him, and he asked an examining officer what it was all about. Did they allow civilians to drop in at prison cages? Who was this civilian, anyway? "That," the officer replied, "is the Secretary of War."

Then the monocle fell.

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HERE AND THERE IN THE S.O.S.

Art in the S.O.S. has just received a terrible setback. Not that art or any form of artistic expression—except camouflage—has anything to do with winning the war, but when a colored sergeant who has put in hard day's work with his labor company chooses to while away his idle hours carving various things out of native stone for the beautification of company headquarters, it would seem as though he ought to be allowed to get away with it. But no, a certain party thought the sergeant's subjects were a little too profane, and so the two pillars, topped by perfectly good cocked dice about to fall into an equally good natural (if you know what is meant) had to be taken down.

The rest of the sergeant's work, a statue of liberty, a 75, a lighthouse and a tank, still stand outside company headquarters, but the reminders of the good old game that used to start off with two bits or maybe only a thin dime and wind up with the week's pay are permanently taboo. But the odds still remain the same, and payday, however distant, is perhaps a better memory refresher than anything carved out of stone could ever be.

It was before the new order about clothes had come out, and the young aviator was very much dolled up. His major looked him over and remarked: "Say, what are you, anyway? The lost Duke of Brebant who turns up in the fourth act, or what?"

The young aviator blushed. Later he changed.

There is a brig in the S.O.S. that is far-famed and fearsome to soldiers A.W.O.L. who have gone down into a certain city and among M.P.'s.

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